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THE PRISONER OF ZENDA

ADAPTED FROM THE CLASSIC NOVEL BY ANTHONY HOPE

THE PRISONER OF ZENDA
ALL NEW MARVEL CLASSICS COMICS



NOW! A COMICS
ADAPTATION OF
THE ADVENTURE SAGA
THAT HAS THRILLED
GENERATION AFTER
GENERATION!

STAN LEE presents

PRISONER OF ZENDA

by Anthony Hope

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INDO RYAL
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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sir Anthony Hope Hawkins, British novelist, was born on February 9th, 1863, the second son of Reverend F.C. Hawkins of London. He received his education at Marlborough and Balliol college in Oxford. In 1877, he was called to the bar in Middle Temple. Hope married Elizabeth Somerville Sheldon of New York in 1903. He was knighted in 1918, and died peacefully in 1933.

Hope was a natural storyteller, whose style influenced the creation of several literary genres. The young novelist achieved enormous popular success upon publication in May 1894, of **THE PRISONER OF ZENDA**. Hope owed partial inspiration for the novel to Robert Louis Stevenson's **PRINCE OTTO**. Zenda established "Rantana romance," which set the tone for later works christened after their fictitious localities.

THE DOLLY DIALOGUES published a few weeks after **ZENDA**, was a precursor of an entire school of apigrammatic drawing-room comedy. In a series of novels, Hope progressed from light comedy and chivalrous romance into more meaningful fiction as exhibited in **THE GOD IN THE CLOTH**, which exposed the effects on English society of Cecil Rhodes's career. Other novels included **HALF A HERO**, a study of Australian politics, and **TRISTRAM OF MENT**, a study of family pride.

PRISONER OF ZENDA has a timeless magic which has made its appeal universal. A dramatic stage version with Sir George Alexander as Rudolph Rassendyll ran for an extensive period at the St. James Theatre. Since then, numerous versions have enthralled audiences both on television and in moviehouses.

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THE PRISONER OF ZENDA



KING RUDOLF II

Had it not been for the richness of her which gave evidence of my relationship with the royal family of Prussia, I must likely would have gone to the gallows the stumpy word I had planned. Instead, I found myself in Prussia, having a hard time with the word any thing I could have done with. Then as it, and then, indeed, it for other than prison.

Rudolf Rassendyll



RUDOLF RASSENDYLL

AND IF IT WERE
 POSSIBLE FOR THAT
 MAN AND HIS FRIENDS
 TO BE CRASHED DOWN
 ON ANY PLANET, WOULD
 HE BE A INSTANT ANNUAL
 OF FORTUNE

Then, I made the crossing with delighted anticipation for my new and beautiful island. But shortly after I boarded the train in Paris, a fellow traveler entered my compartment and...

and I...

WE ARE MENTALLY
THE MOST POPULOUS
AND MOST... BUT
WE ARE NOT STRONG
ENOUGH TO DEFEND
OURSELVES AGAINST
THE STRONGER POWER!

5 SINCE I HADN'T HAD ANY MORE OF LITTLE CHANCE OF OBTAINING ADDITIONAL CROWDED SPACES, I DECIDED TO GET OFF THE TRAIN AT STAMPA -- A SMALL TOWN SOME FIFTY MILES FROM THE CAPITAL...



ON THE STATION PLATFORM, I SAW BEYOND A DOUBT THAT THE MYSTERY HAD NOT BEEN SOLVED BY MY HUSBY--HAPPEN...



THERE SHE IS -- STANDING AT THE JAW. I WONDER IF I KNOW HER FROM SOMEWHERE, AND SHOULD HAVE RECOGNIZED HER...



CHARMING OFF THE WHOLE MATTER I ENJOYED THE LEISURE TIME...

I SHOULD LIKE A ROOM FOR THE NIGHT -- BUT FIRST A MEAL.

DEFINITELY BE SEATED AT A TABLE, SIR, AND MY WAITRESS WILL SERVE YOU.



UNWILLING TO LEARN MORE ABOUT MY ROYAL CUSTOM, I SUSPECTED THE SERVING GIRL HAD MISHEARD MY REQUESTS WITHOUT UNDERSTANDING...

AND WHERE IS PRINCE BLACK RIGHT NOW?

AT THE ROYAL HUNTING LODGE IN SEVEN HOURS -- NOT FAR FROM HERE BUT HE'LL BE LEAVING FOR BRASS-BAY ON THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW, TO BE GARDENED HERE.



FEW PEOPLE IN THE KITCHEN KNEW PRINCE BLACK HIMSELF, SINCE HE'D SPENT MOST OF HIS LIFE AWAY FROM STAMPA, BUT HIS BROTHERS -- PRINCE MICHAEL -- WAS ALWAYS LIVED HERE, AT STAMPA HOUSEHOLD.

WE CALL HIM BLACK MICHAEL BECAUSE OF HIS VERY BLACK HAIR.



THEN PRINCE BLACK AND MICHAEL ARE BROTHERS?

HAH! THEY LOVE EACH OTHER AS MUCH AS MEN AND WOMEN WHO WANT THE SAME THING AND THE SAME NAME.

PLEASE, CHILD -- YOU'RE SPEAKING ABOUT MYSTERY, BESIDES, HERE COMES JORDAN, THE MASTER OF PRINCE MICHAEL'S SERVICE.



Added, as I stepped
from the doorway into
the next morning...

SO THAT'S
SOMEONE GASTLE
--AND CERTAINLY A
FAMOUS PLACE.
WOULD NOT CARE TO
BE AN ENEMY OF
BLACK ARCHER'S...

HOW LONG I SLEPT
I CANNOT SAY
BUT WHEN MY EYES
OPENED I FOUND
THE MAN STANDING
ME WITH SURPRISE
INTEREST...

LOOK AT THAT!
--ENEMY HIM AND
HE'S IN THE PER-
FECT IMAGE OF
THE KING...

AND HERE
THE JEWELRY
JEWELRY!
TODAY...

ON WELL, WHO WORRY
ABOUT THAT IF THIS IS
SUCH THE BEAUTIFUL A
SPOT TO BOTHER ABOUT
BLACK ARCHER'S GASTLE
--AND BESIDES, ALL THIS
FRESH AIR AND EXERCISE
HAS MADE ME SLEEPY...

WHAT IS
YOUR NAME,
SIR?

PERHAPS I MIGHT
ASK YOU THE SAME
QUESTION.

VERY WELL, SIR -- THIS IS
SIR JAMES BLAKE AND I AM
PRIZE FROM THE SERVICE.
WE ARE BOTH IN THE SERVICE
OF THE KING OF ARCHERMAN
AND --

SLEPT!
WAKE!
WAKE!
WAKE!
WAKE!
WAKE!

THE KING HAS ALREADY CON-
SIDERED A BARE BACKING UP
STREET...



... AND WHEN HE FORGOT
THE KING SAW BY HIS
BROTHER...



WELL, PRESENT
WAS AKA TO HIS
MAJESTY?

AND IF THE TRUTH BE KNOWN, I
WAS FEELING THE OTHER MYSELF...
AND TOO, THE KING'S REACTION
HAD REVEALED ME. I THOUGHT THAT WAS
THE LAST REMINDER OF THE
STORY...

WHETHER I HAD BLAST
A MURDER OR AN
ARMED, I KNEW NOT, BUT
I CERTAINLY AVOID WITH
A STRUT...



WELL-- IF
COLONEL SAFT
WAS JONES SAYS
THE KING?

THIS IS MY NAME,
BAGGENTH. --IT'S
FIVE O'CLOCK IN THE
MORNING, AND THE
KING HAS BEEN
PROMISED?



IT WAS BLACK MICHAEL'S
NAME -- PART OF HIS PLAN
TO SEIZE THE FARMER
--FOR IF KING BLIND
DOES NOT APPEAR AT
HIS CONFESSION, HE
WILL PROCEED HIS OWN
AND BLACK MICHAEL
WILL BECOME PRISONER.



WELL, IT MUST HAVE BEEN
PROVE THAT SENT YOU HERE
BAGGENTH, AND IT WILL BE
FIVE THAT TELLING YOU HOW
TO PROCEED-- TO PLACE
THE KING IN PLACE IN
THE CONFESSION.



WELL-- IF
NO -- YOU
MUST
BE RIGHT?

ALL IS LOST IF PRINCE
BLIND DOES NOT APPEAR
IN BURGESS -- THERE I
KNOW THAT BLACK MICHAEL
WANTS TO DO?



YOU MUST
BE BURGENTH -- YOU HAVE THE
THROW FOR THE
MURDERING
KING?

MY HEAR WAS BURGENTH -- BURGENTH -- AS I
STOOD THERE IN PEOPLE'S MARCH, TOWN WITH
BURGENTH -- BURGENTH -- A KING?

BUT FINALLY, STILL NOT REALIZING THE REAL CONSEQUENCES, I FOUND THE WORDS...

VERY WELL... I SHALL ENDURE THE KING'S ORDERS AS OF NOW, I SHALL GO...



THEN, IN A FLASH, I MOVED OFF TO BRING MY OWN ARMY AND GET THE KING'S ORDERS TO REPEL...

WELL, LEAVE THE KING IN YOUR HAND, KING... TAKE HIM TO THE KING'S PALACE AND KEEP HIM HERE AND THERE AT ALL COSTS.

SAY IF BLACK MICHAEL'S MEN SEE THROUGH OUR SCHEMES AND COME LOOKING FOR THE KING, KILL THEM OFF ANY WAY YOU CAN.



SAFELY, I ENTERED THE FULL CONSEQUENCES OF MY ACT...

BY JUNE, I SHALL BELIEVE YOU WILL GET AWAY WITH IT VERY WELL REACH THE STEELBACK TRAIN ON MONDAY - NOW HURRY.



QUITE AND PLEASE KILLED MY MIND ALL THE MORE AS HE ARRIVED IN STEELBACK. NOT ONLY WAS I NOW PLAYING THE ROLE OF A KING BUT I WAS ALSO TAKING THE PLACE OF A MAN WITH APPARENTLY QUITE OUTLIERED SENSING...



SAFELY, I WAS STILL BRINGING ME ON THE CUSTODY OF THE COURT AS HE WAS MET BY A GROUP OF MEN IN THE CHARGE OF MAINTAINING ORDER...

AND NOW IT WAS ALL A REMEMBERING REMIND. THE PROCESSION TO THE CATHEDRAL WAS LINED WITH CROWDING THROUGHS, AND THE BELL OF THE CITY RANG JOYFULLY. THE KING HAD ARRIVED AND HIS REGIMENTARY!

NOT BUT REPEL! I WOULD REEL HIS MIND!



I WAS, HOWEVER, AND I WAS REEL - BUT NOT HIS MIND!





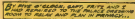
YOU KNOW, EUGENE, YOU LOOK DIFFERENT SOMEHOW TODAY. THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT YOU... STOPPING... ABOUT YOU. YOU WERE ABSOLUTELY PROFOUND AT THE CEREMONY.

WELL, I... ALL THINGS YOU FLATTER I HOPE I MAY... ANOTHER PLEASE YOU.



AND SO IT'S FINALLY DONE! ON BEHALF OF MYSELF, I THE MOST FULL MONARCH OF EUROPE, I DECLARE THIS ANNIVERSARY OF THE PALACE OF HIS ANCESTORS AND HOLD FOR HIS NAME AND HEART THE BEAUTIFUL FEAST.

BUT, I WAS ABOUTING TO REMEMBER THAT IT WAS ONLY FOR A WHILE.



BY FIVE O'CLOCK, EAST, FIVE AND I WAS RETURNED TO THE PALACE ORDERING FOOD TO BEAT AND PLAN IN PRIVATE...



NOW LET'S GET BACK TO THE KING, SO I CAN RETURN TO BEING PLAY OLD MURDERER AGAIN.

VERY WELL... YOU AND I WILL GO TO THE LEVER LOOPS TOMORROW AND BRING THE KING BACK TO THE PALACE. BUT FIRST WE'LL REMAIN HERE...



NOW LISTEN TO ME, FIVE. KEEP THE KING'S BEDROOM MORE LOCKED FOR ALLOW AND BRING TO BATHING. HE HAS BATHING AND CANNOT BE DISTURBED UNTIL MORNING. DO YOU UNDERSTAND?

PERFECTLY, COLONEL EAST.



THAT NIGHT, EAST LED ME TO A SECRET PASSAGEWAY...



GOOD ENOUGH, EUGENE!! -- THAT ONE-SIXTH SHOULD DO THE TRICK. BUT IF ANYONE WOULD BRING ME UP, REMEMBER THAT YOU'RE MY MURDERER.

NOW COME -- WITH MY LOCK, WE SHOULD REACH THE HUNTING LODGE BY TWENTY.



HOW WHEN I OPEN THIS
DOOR, WE'LL FIND OURSELVES
OUTSIDE THE PALACE
GARDENS --



?...WHERE OUR HORSES
ARE WAITING?'

ALL RIGHT,
RAGSWEATH, WE'RE
GOING. JUST PRAY TO
HEAVEN THAT OUR
MISSION WILL BE
SUCCESSFUL?'

OUR JOURNEY WAS UNEXPECTED, AND WE
HAD SOME TIME, BUT WHEN WE REACHED
THE LODGE IT WAS DARK AND STILL AS
DEATH...



NO LIGHTS
-- BUT WHERE'S
JOSEF?'

THE DARK?
NOT IF SOMETHING
HAPPENED
TO HIM?'

THE DOOR OPENED THE BRICK AND BURN
LET A LANTERN AS HE REACHED THE
CELLAR STAIRS...



LADY -- BEWARE
POWER -- NEAR THE
BOTTOM OF THE
STAIRS...



SOMETHING,
BUT -- LEAPING INTO
THE DARK CELLAR?'

COME ON,
RAGSWEATH --
WE'LL SOON LEARN
WHAT TRAP
MEANS.

IT'S JOSEF?
HE'S DEAD -- DEAD
WELL, SUCCESSFUL
THE STAIRS?'

AND THE KING IS
GONE, SUCCESSFUL --
ABDUCTED BY JOSEF
REDAWORTH, BLACK
KNIGHT OF DEATH.



IMMEDIATELY, HE BOTH
FORGOT THE MISTAKE
-- BUT THE KING WAS
NOW A PRISONER OF
THE DARK KNIGHTS
OF THE UNFORGOTTEN
SILVER CASTLE.

STILL, HE HAD TO BE SURE, AND SEARCHED EVERY CORNER OF THE CAVES AS WELL AS THE MOUNTS OF THE HORSES, BUT EVEN THE KING WAS UNABLE TO BE PREPARED...

WARRIOR, RASSEMBLY...
WE MUST RETURN TO
STRELSAU AND MARCHON
THE MORNING OTHERWISE,
BLACK MICHAEL WILL
CLAIM THE THRONE
AND REIGN.

VERY WELL, BART--
BUT FIRST WE MUST
BURY UNDEAD...

NO, THERE
ISN'T TIME--THEY
MAY BE BACK
TO--

WAIT --
A MOMENT TO
THAT. THEY'RE
COMING AGAIN!
WAIT!

WE'VE GOT
TO GET BACK TO
THE HORSEBURN.

WE MADE IT TO THE HORSEBURN AND WAITED IN
BATED BREATH AS THE DRINKING PARTY
APPROACHED--FOUR DRUNKEN AND FOUR ON
FOOT CARRYING WARREN TRAILS...

YOU SEE, RASSEMBLY?
PARTY'S AT THE JOB OF
BURNING THE HORSE.

YES--BUT BY
HEAVEN, I'LL NOT
LEAVE THIS PLACE
UNTIL I'VE STRUCK
A BLOW AT THE
DRINKING HORSE.
HORSEBURN!

IF YOU WANT, RASSEMBLY,
BUT WAIT UNTIL THEY ARE
SLEEPING IN FRONT OF
THE HORSEBURN AND THEN--

"CHARGE WITHOUT WARNING!!"

WE PLUNGED HEADLONG INTO THEIR HOST,
TAKING THEM BY SURPRISE SO THEY COULD
NOT DRAW THEIR SWORDS, AND HOPING TO USE
OUR HORSES WITH TELLING EFFECT...



INITIALLY, THE STRATEGY WORKED AND FOR LONG MOMENTS THERE WAS THE SILENT CLASH OF STEEL STRIKING STEEL...



... BUT THEN I WAS FORCED TO MEET ALL ARE FROM ONE OF MY ADVERSARIES FOR I REALIZED THAT MY BACKUP WAS TOO ENGAGED AGAINST SUCH A REASON...



THERE'LL BE MORE THAN JUST A BATTLE THIS NIGHT -- THAT I PROMISE YOU!

AS I DRINKED ANOTHER GLASS OF FORTITUDE THAT SART WAS ALSO GIVING A GOOD ACCOUNT OF HIMSELF!!



THAT'S IT, SART! YOU'VE TURNED THE TIDE! AND WITH THESE WOUNDS!

BUT THEN, CHARGING FROM BEHIND...



SART! LOOK OUT, MAN!!



YOU SAVED ME PART TWO, MY FRIENDS, BUT IF I CAN --



LOOK! IT'S THE KING -- THE KING!!

STOP THEM--
SHOOT
THEM!!

COME ON, SART! WE'VE
ADVISED JORDAN'S DEATH
BUT HE CAN'T FIGHT BACK
YET-- LET'S GET AWAY
FROM HERE

REACHING THE PALACE, I TURNED AND WAVED
MY HAND IN FAREWELL GOODBYE...

ARHH--!

BANG

...BUT SURELY PERHAPS
IT IS A BULLET STRUCK
MY FOREHEAD.

LIT FOOT MARKS FOR A SHORT DISTANCE BEFORE
STOPPING TO BANGING MY HEAD AGAIN...

WELL, RASCHIDYLL,
BETWEEN US WE ACCOUNTED
FOR FOUR CASUALTIES!

SHUP-- AND
WELL GIVE BLACK
MICHAEL SOME
ADDITIONAL NO-
RIES BEFORE
WE'RE DONE.

AND COME
TO THINK OF
IT, SART, THIS
ASSASSINAT OF
MINE MAY PROVE
TO BE TO
OUR ADVANTAGE
THAT.

INDEED, BACK AT THE PALACE IN THE
MORNING, A LARGE FILE OF DOCUMENTS
BUILT UP THE ROYAL SIGNATURE...

YOU SEE I WITH
THE SKILLER HAND
I CAN'T BE EXPECTED
TO MAKE ANYTHING
MORE THAN A SCRAP
--AND NO ONE WILL
BE ABLE TO ACCUSE
THE KING'S SIGNATURE
OF BEING A FORGE.

SOOF
RASCHIDYLL BUT
I JUST WENT YOU
TO BE JUSTICE
SOMEHOW NOW
--THAT OF THE
BOX-- ARE HERE
IN STOKESLAND.

ONLY FOUR, FIVE? I
ARE YOU SURE? THEN
THE KING MUST BE
SAFE, AND THE OTHER
THREE ARE SHARPING
HIM AT JEROME. WHICH
THREE ARE THESE?

BE SURETY,
SARTAN, AND REY-
BAND-- LEAVING
LAURENCE, CRADSTEIN,
AND RUPERT MENTAU
AT JEROME.

WHAT ARE
YOU TALKING
ABOUT? I KNOW
THE DEVIL ARE
THE BUTT

SIX SO-CALLED GENTLEMEN OF BLACK
MICHAEL'S PERSONNEL-- ALL OF WHOM
WOULD CUT A THROAT OR STAB A BACK ON
THE SURESTEST ORDER. MICHAEL NEVER
DOES ANYTHING WITHOUT SOME OF THEM.

SO IT SEEMS THAT MY
TROUBLE WAS ONLY
BEGINNING. I SPENT
THE REST OF THE MORNING
THE LORNING ABOUT
ABOUT MY BUSINESS...

AND THAT AFTERNOON, BEFORE MIDNIGHT, I CALLED ON THE ADDRESS BLANK, FINDING IT WAS NECESSARY TO MEET UP SOME-
 BODIES, BUT IN MY HEART, I KNEW BETTER...

YOU HAVE CHANGED
 FACE BECOMING FINE,
 GIRL -- A CHANGE I LIKE
 VERY MUCH.

I ASK YOU TO
 SPEAK NOTHING BUT
 TRUTH YOUR HEART
 TELLS YOUR FLORA,
 AND TO CALL ME
 NOT SIRE -- BUT BY
 MY FIRST NAME.

THANK YOU --
 ANYHOW, BUT IF
 MY HEART TELLS ME,
 I HATE YOUR BROTHER
 ANYHOW, MUST I
 STILL ENDURE HIS
 COMPANY?

YOU MUST
 RESIST ME DARE
 YOU DO NOT DARE,
 BUT I HOPE THAT
 WILL STILL ADMIT
 ME AND --

HEAT -- THAT
 SOUNDS LIKE THE
 TEMPER OF
 HEAT --

WHY, HERE'S MICHAEL
 AND -- AND THREE OF 'EM
 ARE -- PERHAPS I'D BETTER
 LET THEM IN, YOURSELF -- IF
 ONLY TO AVOID
 UNPLEASANTNESS...

THE FOUR ENTERED, AND BLACK MICHAEL WAS HIS USUAL
 AUDACITY SELF...

GREETINGS,
 GIRL, YOU'RE LOOKING
 EXTREMELY WELL -- BUT
 I SEE YOUR MIND
 IS... HEAT.

THANK YOU FOR
 YOUR INTEREST, SIRE,
 BUT IT'S NOTHING
 -- SIMPLY DIFFER BY
 A LITTLE BIT.

WELL, LET US HOPE
 THE COOL DOES NOT BITE
 ABOUT... ALTHOUGH SUCH
 THINGS ARE AHEAD
 LATER.

THEY BOTH KNEW HE WASN'T REALLY DECEIT-
 ING ONE ANOTHER...

ALLOW ME TO INTRODUCE
 THREE OF THE MOST IM-
 PORTANT AND LOYAL OF OUR
 COUNTRY'S MEMBERS --
 MY VERY FAITHFUL FRIENDS
 MR. MICHAEL, MR. MICHAEL,
 AND MICHAEL.

I AM VERY
 PLEASED TO
 MEET YOU,
 SIRE.

IN POINT OF FACT, I WAS PLEASED ONLY TO
 MATCH PACE WITH THE MARCH OF MY
 ENEMIES...

BUT NOW, IF YOU
 WILL EXCUSE US, I BELIEVE
 THE PRINCESS FLORA AND
 I COULD USE SOME
 FRESH AIR.

AND OF COURSE MICHAEL WAS ACQUAINTED
 AND FRIENDLY WITH ME, SO THEY WOULD
 NEVER KNOW MY SECRET WHEN THE TIME WAS
 RIGHT. I DID NOT KNOW THAT TIME WOULD
 COME SO SOON...

THE VERY NEXT DAY, HOWEVER, AS SART AND I WERE PLAYING CHECKS, I RECEIVED A LETTER...

AND WANT IT IMMEDIATELY?

IT'S SURELY SIGNED "A." I WONDER IF...

WELL, BY JOVE, IT MUST BE FROM ANTONETTE DE ARABIAN -- MY FELLOW PRISONER ON THE FRONT -- AND SHE KNOWS BLACK MICHAEL! SAFT, WE'VE RUN INTO A STAGNATE, AND NOT ON THE CHESSBOARD!

LOOK HERE...

Go as this lady you like to the house at the end of the Avenue at midnight... and alone take the girl on the wall back of the garden, even to the night, walk to the window house. If you find your life in danger, your life is in danger.

SAFT, I'M GOING.

ARE YOU SURE, BLACK MICHAEL, HOWEVER, I RECEIVED THIS LETTER? DO YOU WANT TO WALK RIGHT INTO A TRAP...?

TRAP OR NO TRAP, I INTEND TO FIND OUT WHAT THIS LETTER MEANS -- AND YOU'LL HAVE THE DEVIL OF A TIME STOPPING ME!

WE DID NOT EVEN TRY, INSTEAD RUNNING WITH ME TO THE END OF NEW AVENUE...

WAIT HERE FOR ME, SAFT -- AND KEEP THE HORSES FOR A FAST BETWIXT.

GRANT ON IT, LAD, AND BE CAREFUL.

AS EXPECTED, ANTONETTE DE ARABIAN WAITED UP AT THE GARDEN HOUSE...

SURELY -- THERE'S NO TIME TO LOSE!

I STOPPED FORWARD, THINKING THAT IF IT WAS A TRAP I WAS PREPARED FOR IT...

BUT THE WOMAN HERELY CLOSED THE DOOR, LEAVING THE ROOM DARKENED AND BRIAN SPEAKING IN A VOICE OF DARKNESS...

I KNOW WHO YOU ARE, MR. BRADSHAW, SO JUST LISTEN TO ME, FICKER, AND I'LL ASK YOU TO WRITE THAT LETTER -- TO TELL YOU HERE, WE WON FOLLOW YOU ANYWHERE -- AND THERE OF THE MICHIGAN, YOU'LL BE HERE IN FORTY-NINE DAYS.



BECAUSE I LOVE BLACK MICHAEL, I DO YOU THINK I WANT TO SEE HIM HARRIED TO DEATH? I KNOW I WROTE THE LETTER, I'LL CERTAINLY GET THE TIME AHEAD MYSELF, HARRIED -- TO GIVE ME TIME TO BRING YOU.



NOW GO OUT THE DOOR -- QUICKLY -- AND YOU'LL FIND A LAMP -- AGAINST THE WALL, SET OVER IT AND FLEE FOR YOUR VERY LIFE!

BUT IT WAS ALREADY TOO LATE...

WE KNOW YOU'RE IN THERE, MR. BRADSHAW, WE OFFER YOU THIS CONDUCT TO THE MICHIGAN AND FIFTY THOUSAND POUNDS IN AMERICAN CURRENCY IF YOU LEAVE MICHIGAN AT ONCE!



GET AWAY, FICKER, WHATEVER YOU DO, STAY AWAY FROM THE DOOR.

OBVIOUSLY, IT WAS SIMPLY A TRICK TO BRING ENTRY TO MY MICHIGAN...

THEY MEAN TO MURDER YOU, MICHAEL, WILL THEY ARREST YOU, FICKER, DEFEAT THE MICHIGAN, PROCLAIM HIMSELF THE NEW KING, AND MARRY PRINCESS ALAN?



A PRETTY PEOP, BUT WHY MARRIAGE, DO YOU?

DO I QUOTED FROM THE BOOK ON THE PAGE -- UNDERSTANDING, BUT NOT SPEAKING IT, AND CALLED OUT --



BECAUSE I LOVE YOUR OFFER, THE ROOM IS UNDERSTANDING, BUT IT WON'T BRING -- PUT YOUR WEIGHT AGAINST IT?



AND WHEN THEY BLAST THROUGH THE DOOR WITH UNEXPECTED SWEEPS...

...I HUNTER THEM TO DEATHS AROUND THE SEA TABLE



AND UP AND OVER IN A FLASH... TO FIND BAPT BOWLING WITH THE MORTAR...

ROBBENWYLL!
THOSE BOUNDS --
I THOUGHT YOU
WERE FINE ADAP!

FOR ME FOR ME!
THOSE BOUNDS WERE
AMAZING, BAPT. FOR
THE FINEST STORY
YOU CAN

AND THE DEVIL
ARE YOU LAUGHING
ABOUT IT?

JUST THE DEVIL
OF THESE BATTLESHIP
BATTLES! FOR YES,
BAPT -- YOU SHOULD
HAVE BEEN IT!

AND I LAUGHED SOME MORE, LONGER AND LONGER
TILL I'D EVER LAUGHED IN MY LIFE.

NOTHING AT ALL,
 BOB. THERE IS
 NOTHING FOR ME,
 AND I DON'T
 THINK I—

THESE ARE THE
REMARKS OF THE
JURY IN THE CASE OF
THE ALLEGEDLY
KIDNAPED ALI. THE
JURY HAS REACHED
A VERDICT.

YOUR TEACHING
WAS VERY SUPPORT
IN IT, ESPECIALLY
AS IF YOU ACTUALLY
WAS THERE.

YES, WELL, ARE
YOU'RE AN ANGRY
PERSON, PLEASE
WITH ME, I COULD
HAVE BEEN.

After some 2 1/2 hours the ship was
about 100 miles from the coast of the
United States.

PRINCESS FLORA,
IT IS HARDER FOR
THAN I WHO BELONGS
TO HEAR THE
SOUND OF MUSIC
AND SINGING...

1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 2119, 2120, 2121, 2122, 2123, 2124, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 2129, 2130, 2131, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135, 2136, 2137, 2138, 2139, 2140, 2141, 2142, 2143, 2144, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, 2149, 2150, 2151, 2152, 2153, 2154, 2155, 2156, 2157, 2158, 2159, 2160, 2161, 2162, 2163, 2164, 2165, 2166, 2167, 2168, 2169, 2170, 2171, 2172, 2173, 2174, 2175, 2176, 2177, 2178, 2179, 2180, 2181, 2182, 2183, 2184, 2185, 2186, 2187, 2188, 2189, 2190, 2191, 2192, 2193, 2194, 2195, 2196, 2197, 2198, 2199, 2200, 2201, 2202, 2203, 2204, 2205, 2206, 2207, 2208, 2209, 2210, 2211, 2212, 2213, 2214, 2215, 2216, 2217, 2218, 2219, 2220, 2221, 2222, 2223, 2224, 2225, 2226, 2227, 2228, 2229, 2230, 2231, 2232, 2233, 2234, 2235, 2236, 2237, 2238, 2239, 2240, 2241, 2242, 2243, 2244, 2245, 2246, 2247, 2248, 2249, 2250, 2251, 2252, 2253, 2254, 2255, 2256, 2257, 2258, 2259, 2260, 2261, 2262, 2263, 2264, 2265, 2266, 2267, 2268, 2269, 2270, 2271, 2272, 2273, 2274, 2275, 2276, 2277, 2278, 2279, 2280, 2281, 2282, 2283, 2284, 2285, 2286, 2287, 2288, 2289, 2290, 2291, 2292, 2293, 2294, 2295, 2296, 2297, 2298, 2299, 2300, 2301, 2302, 2303, 2304, 2305, 2306, 2307, 2308, 2309, 2310, 2311, 2312, 2313, 2314, 2315, 2316, 2317, 2318, 2319, 2320, 2321, 2322, 2323, 2324, 2325, 2326, 2327, 2328, 2329, 2330, 2331, 2332, 2333, 2334, 2335, 2336, 2337, 2338, 2339, 2340, 2341, 2342, 2343, 2344, 2345, 2346, 2347, 2348, 2349, 2350, 2351, 2352, 2353, 2354, 2355, 2356, 2357, 2358, 2359, 2360, 2361, 2362, 2363, 2364, 2365, 2366, 2367, 2368, 2369, 2370, 2371, 2372, 2373, 2374, 2375, 2376, 2377, 2378, 2379, 2380, 2381, 2382, 2383, 2384, 2385, 2386, 2387, 2388, 2389, 2390, 2391, 2392, 2393, 2394, 2395, 2396, 2397, 2398, 2399, 2400, 2401, 2402, 2403, 2404, 2405, 2406, 2407, 2408, 2409, 2410, 2411, 2412, 2413, 2414, 2415, 2416, 2417, 2418, 2419, 2420, 2421, 2422, 2423, 2424, 2425, 2426, 2427, 2428, 2429, 2430, 2431, 2432, 2433, 2434, 2435, 2436, 2437, 2438, 2439, 2440, 2441, 2442, 2443, 2444, 2445, 2446, 2447, 2448, 2449, 2450, 2451, 2452, 2453, 2454, 2455, 2456, 2457, 2458, 2459, 2460, 2461, 2462, 2463, 2464, 2465, 2466, 2467, 2468, 2469, 2470, 2471, 2472, 2473, 2474, 2475, 2476, 2477, 2478, 2479, 2480, 2481, 2482, 2483, 2484, 2485, 2486, 2487, 2488, 2489, 2490, 2491, 2492, 2493, 2494, 2495, 2496, 2497, 2498, 2499, 2500, 2501, 2502, 2503, 2504, 2505, 2506, 2507, 2508, 2509, 2510, 2511, 2512, 2513, 2514, 2515, 2516, 2517, 2518, 2519, 2520, 2521, 2522, 2523, 2524, 2525, 2526, 2527, 2528, 2529, 2530, 2531, 2532, 2533, 2534, 2535, 2536, 2537, 2538, 2539, 2540, 2541, 2542, 2543, 2544, 2545, 2546, 2547, 2548, 2549, 2550, 2551, 2552, 2553, 2554, 2555, 2556, 2557, 2558, 2559, 2560, 2561, 2562, 2563, 2564, 2565, 2566, 2567, 2568, 2569, 2570, 2571, 2572, 2573, 2574, 2575, 2576, 2577, 2578, 2579, 2580, 2581, 2582, 2583, 2584, 2585, 2586, 2587, 2588, 2589, 2590, 2591, 2592, 2593, 2594, 2595, 2596, 2597, 2598, 2599, 2600, 2601, 2602, 2603, 2604, 2605, 2606, 2607, 2608, 2609, 2610, 2611, 2612, 2613, 2614, 2615, 2616, 2617, 2618, 2619, 2620, 2621, 2622, 2623, 2624, 2625, 2626, 2627, 2628, 2629, 2630, 2631, 2632, 2633, 2634, 2635, 2636, 2637, 2638, 2639, 2640, 2641, 2642, 2643, 2644, 2645, 2646, 2647, 2648, 2649, 2650, 2651, 2652, 2653, 2654, 2655, 2656, 2657, 2658, 2659, 2660, 2661, 2662, 2663, 2664, 2665, 2666, 2667, 2668, 2669, 2670, 2671, 2672, 2673, 2674, 2675, 2676, 2677, 2678, 2679, 26

AND LATER, ALONG WITH
THEY DO THE FIGHTING, I
KNOW THIS AND AM ACT, I
AND NO LONGER IN THE FIGHT
BUT CREATING - GIVEN OF
I HAD NO POWER TO ME.

PLAYA:
MORE THAN
LONG TRIP
OF 1000000
I LOVE
YOU.

OH, IF ONLY
YOU WERE NOT
THE ABOVE...
THEN COULD I
ENJOY HOW I
LOVE MEAT,
MILK...

THE SUSTAINMENT OF
ANY COMMUNITY



WHY AM I FOOLISH --
WHO CAN IT BE? -- THAT
I LOVE YOU SO MUCH NOW?
... WHEN I NEVER COULD
BEHOLD YOU

SHE MUST HAVE BEHOLDEN / THE KING FIRST BEFORE
HE -- IT WAS I WHO HAD BEEN LOST, AND I ALONE!
THIS WAS MY CHANCE TO TELL HIM EVERYTHING...



I LET HIM TO A DEATH AND, HOLDING HER
HANDS IN MINE, PROMPTED TO MY DEATH
BEFORE HIM...

FLAVIA, IF I WERE NOT
THE KING... IF I WERE ONLY
A COMMONER, I... FLAVIA, I
HADLY KNOW HOW TO FORCE
YOU... BUT I... I'M AFRAID...

YOUR ANSWERS IF
ANY...

HOW LONG HAD HE BEEN LISTENING? HE
KNEW... BUT HE INTERRUPTED AS JUST IN THE
MOMENT OF TIME...

A FRODO BAGGINS, YES, BUT HIS EXCELLENCE THE
KINGDOM WAS BEEN WAITING
TO BE SPARED TO YOUR
WISDOM.

YES -- KING,
FLAVIA, WE MUST
NOT KEEP HIS
EXCELLENCE
ANYMORE.



BY LAST THE BRILLIANT ATLAS WAS DONE AND
SO I BEHEATED FLAVIA WITH THE KING TO
MY DEATH, HE WAS BEHEATED WITH
DEATH...

AND HAVE
THE KING?

IN THE END
BEHEATED NOT HAVE
HIS EXCELLENCE
AND THE KINGDOM
FLAVIA /



WILL YOU KEEP
THE KING AS A
SIGN OF MY
AND MYSELF?

I SHALL TREASURE
IT AS MY, FLAVIA,
REMEMBERING THAT
THE KINGDOM CANNOT
BEHEATED WITH THE
KINGDOM OF THE
ONE FROM WHOM IT
CAME.



I WAS BEHEATED, BUT I WAS NOT BEHEATED AS
THE KING AND BEHEATED BEHEATED AS THE KING
FLAVIA, AND MY KING AND MY KING
THE KING AND THE KING AND BEHEATED BEHEATED ME.

LATER, WHEN THE KING WAS AT BEHEATED MY
DEATH TO BEHEATED ME, I WAS IN MY KINGDOM AND
MY KINGDOM...

FLAVIA, WE MUST
AND THE KING --
BEFORE I BEHEATED A KING
MY KING, LET'S GO
TO BEHEATED, CROWN MYSELF
AND GET THE KING BACK.

ALL RIGHT,
BEHEATED...
FROM WHAT I WAS
BEHEATED? I
BELIEVE THAT
MYSELF OF BE
MYSELF.



I HUP TO FEEL MYSELF AWAY FROM HER, BUT I KNEW THAT TO LOSE ANY SENSE WOULD MEAN ALL MY GOOD RESOLVE.

I WENT STRAIGHT TO THE HOME OF MARSHALL STRANGERS...



IN LEAVING STRANGERS FOR A FEW DAYS, MARSHALL, I'M PLACING THE SAFETY OF PRINCESS FLORA IN YOUR HANDS.

LET AN ONE APPROACH HER... ESPECIALLY NOT ANY KNOWN TO ANY OF US HERE.



I UNDERSTAND YOU... I SHALL GUARD HER PERSONALLY.

I'LL SEND COURIERS TO YOU ABOUT NOW. IF NONE APPEARS FOR PRINCESS FLORA, YOU WILL ASSURE THE KING IS DEAD AND PROCLAIM THE PRINCESS FLORA AS QUEEN.

YOU'VE BEEN A BRAVE MAN AND A BRAVE MAN, BUT I FEAR YOU KEEP YOURSELF BLIND ON THIS MISSION.



THANK YOU, STRANGERS. LET IT BE GENERALLY KNOWN THAT I'VE DONE SOME RECKONING.

YES, SIR, AND THAT WON'T BRING YOU HONORS IN YOUR... POINT.



AS HE STRAINED HIS HEARING OF MY RECKONING, HE GREATLY ENLIGHTENED HIS MIND, AND WELL UNDERSTOOD THE URGENCY OF MY SITUATION.

MAINTAINING THE PRETENSE THAT PARTY JOINED IN MARSHALL'S CASTLE, PRINCE'S PARTY ESCORT WHICH WAS STARTED ACROSS THE VALLEY FROM SENNA CASTLE...

I WAS ACCOMPANIED BY DAVID PRINCE, AND THEN THEY WENT DOWN ONLY THAT MY LIFE WAS IN DANGER AND THAT SOMETHING HAD TO BE DONE FROM SENNA CASTLE...





WELCOME TO DARLEHAM CAVE!

THANK YOU, FITZ, BUT I'M AFRAID WE MUST BEGIN AT ONCE TO PLAN OUR STRATEGY FOR RESCUING THE PRISONERS OF ZENON.



BY NOW, BLACK MICHAEL MUST KNOW WE'RE HERE. ALL OF "THE BAY" ARE ACROSS THE VALLEY AT ZENON AND WILL BE WATCHING EVERY MOVE WE MAKE.

THAT THE SAFETY OF THE PRISONERS MUST BE OUR FIRST CONSIDERATION.

OF COURSE, FITZ, BUT--

FINISH ME, SIR...

WE HAD NOT BAHN AT ZENON. HE'S NOT EVEN AN ARAB, WHEN--

THERE ARE THREE VIEWING TO SEE YOUR MAJESTY, ANNOUNCING THEMSELVES AS LAMENBERG, ARNSTEIN AND ROBERT HENTLEAU.



THE OTHER THREE OF THE BOX? THEY'LL WANT TO RECOGNIZE US THEN WE MEET IN THE JEWELRY, BUT THAT CAN BEA BOTH WAYS. SHOW THEM IN.

AS THEY ENTERED, IT WAS ROBERT HENTLEAU WHO IMMEDIATELY DEMANDS THE MOST ATTENTION...

WELCOME TO DARLEHAM CAVE, GENTLEMEN. YOU MUST START WITH US AND TELL US ANY NEWS OF MY BROTHER MICHAEL.

JOHN BATHIE AT ZENON CASTLE PREVENT OUR ACCEPTANCE, YOUR "MAJESTY."



DUKE MICHAEL PRAYS THAT YOU WILL FORGIVE HIM FOR NOT GREETING YOU IN PERSON, BUT COULDN'T EVER RISK AT ZENON...



...AND HE WOULD NOT... EXCUSE YOU.

NEVERTHELESS, MAY WE SOON BECOME BETTER ACQUAINTED.

THERE WAS SOMETHING ABOUT THE JEREMY BAHN IN HENTLEAU'S ARROGANT FACE THAT MADE HIM CALLED THAT OUR PLAN MUST BE SET IN MOTION AT ONCE.

THREE! AS SLOW AS YOU
UNSETTLING QUEST HAS
BEEN, I'VE BEEN HARDY
CONVULSION WITH SHIP
AND FIGHT...



...AND WHEN A BLOODY FIGHT HAD
BEEN...
...AND WHEN A BLOODY FIGHT HAD BEEN...
...AND WHEN A BLOODY FIGHT HAD BEEN...

THE REST OF YOU GENTLEMEN
JUST EXCUSE PRIZE AND ME FROM
...WE HAVE AN ARRIVAL TO
...AT THE END OF THE ROAD.



...IF I PROTEST BY ROOM
...FROM THE GOLD ROOM
...AND, PRITTY, NOW ALL YOU HAVE TO
...IS PERSUADE THE MESSY
...TO SERVE UP
...OUR ROOM.

WELL, I'LL
CERTAINLY TO
IN BED.
MADENYLL.



...AND WHEN HE ARRIVED AT THAT PLACE WHERE MY
...ADVENTURE HAD BEEN...

TELL THE MESSY
THAT WE ARE ON THE
...AND THAT I AM SUFFERING
FROM A SEVERE
...ORDER A
PRIVATE ROOM AND
DINNER FOR TWO.

BUT IF YOU
STAYED HERE
...THEY'LL
...YOU.



...INTO A PRIVATE ROOM, I REACHED MY
...AND WAITED FOR THE MESSY'S
...TO ENTER, AND MESSY ENTERED AND MESSY...

...THE ROOM...
...THEN IT WAS THE ROOM
...WHO HAD BEEN BEFORE,
...WEARING A MESSY!
...FORGIVE ME, MESSY, FOR
...THE THING I SAID
...BEFORE I'VE MUST
TELL ANOTHER...

...NOT A MESSY
OF THE KING'S PRESENCE
HERE, NOW TAKE A SEAT
SO I CAN TALK TO YOU...





THE KING OFFERS YOU MORE THAN I WOULD. RAGGENWYLL — SAFE CONDUCT ACROSS THE FRONTIER AND A MOUNTAIN SUMMIT IF YOU LEAVE THE COUNTRY.



TELL HIM THAT I REFUSED OF COURSE.

AND BEFORE YOU GO... HOW IS YOUR PROSPECT?

HE IS ALIVE, AND NO I DID NOT PARTWELL. RAGGENWYLL



THEN CAME THE MOST BRISKEY ACT I HAVE EVER KNOWN. HE WAS BORED IN PARTING —

—HE HAD PARTED OUT QUICKER THAN THOUGHT, AND A BANGOR FLASHED IN THE EYES!



I CRASHED ON MYSELF, AND FELT BLIND PAIN IN MY SHOULDER...

ABRUPTLY THEY WHIRLED INTO HIS ARMED AND WAS OFF LIKE AN ARROW — PURSUED ONLY BY SMOKE AND DUST, BOTH USELESS.



I TELL, BRAGGADORE.

I BROKE LATE THAT NIGHT TO LEARN THAT JOHANN AND HALLIN HAD THE TOWN IN LAIR FOR HIM...



AN EARLY MORNING OF SUMMER BASTARD, JOHANN KNOWS OF YOUR MANAGERSHIP, OF COURSE — BUT HE WANTS TO BE BLASPHEM TO A CHANCE TO BE ON HIS SIDE.

BRING HIM ON, WIFE.

ANY CHANCE OF THAT? YOU HAD BETTER, HADDER I WAS. BARELY AWARE OF IT AS I BEGAN SPEAKING TO JOHANN...



WE'LL TRY YOU A LARGE MANDATE, JOHANN, IF YOU'LL TELL US HOW TO BEST RECOVER THE KING. WHERE IS HE KEPT IN THE CASTLE?

IN THE BURNING PRISON, AT THE END OF THE PRISON BRIDGE, A FLIGHT OF STONE STEPS LEADS TO FOUR CONNECTED ROOMS.

THE KING IS IN THE ANGEL ROOM AND GUARDED BY "FIVE MEN" IN THE PETER ROOM.

"WELL, IT IS NECESSARY TO PROVE TO THE KING, 'THE SON' NEED ONLY TO REMOVE THE BARS OF HIS GOLD CHAIN AND FORCE HIS WEIGHTED BODY THROUGH THE OPENING INTO A LARGE CHAMBER-- THERE FORT -- KNOWN AS JAHN'S LAB -- WHICH LEADS DOWN INTO THE MOUNT."



IN OTHER WORDS THE KING WOULD BEHOLD

"EXCELLENT, JOHNN-- HERE'S YOUR MESSAGE-- BUT REMEMBER-- NOT A WORD TO ANYONE CONCERNING THE PROPOSED REVENUE."



"THANK YOU, SIR, THANK YOU-- AND MAY GOD AID YOUR ATTEMPT!"

"AFTER HIS MESSAGE WAS RECEIVED, BART AND I RUSHED OUT INTO THE NIGHT..."



"FURTHERMORE, JOHNN CLAIMED THAT THE KING'S REBELLION IS BREAKING DOWN."

"THEN WE MUST ACT, BART-- AND ACT QUICKLY."

"THE NEXT DAY I FELT WELL ENOUGH TO LEAVE MY BED-- THOUGH I RECEIVED A SHOCK WHEN VERY HEAVILY LAIN MY BED AGAIN..."



"FURTHER, STRANGE AND BRUTAL A FEELING TO SEE YOU, SIR-- MORE OTHER THAN THE PROPOSED REVENUE."

"BART, REMEMBER! DON'T ON BART--!"

"THEN SHE WAS KISSING BEHIND ME, AND ALL ELSE BUT HER SHORT PRESENCE WAS BRUTAL. BART..."



"O, MY DARLING-- IN MY DREAM I CHASED YOU FOR NOTHING, BUT IN THE NIGHT I THINK GOD WOULD KNOW!"

"WELL, SAID TO STEELMAN OF YOUR DREAMS, BART, AND I BELIEVE A GARDEN AND A STONE UNTIL THEY AGREE TO BRING ME HERE."

"UNDER PLAIN'S BATTLE CRIES, AND IN THE PRESENCE OF HER SMOOTHER AND BRUTAL BART, I FELT MYSELF ACCORDING QUICKLY..."



"BART, YOU, I BELIEVE MYSELF, NOTHING I CAN BRING BACK..."

WE PROCEEDED ON FOOT TO THE
EDGE OF THE MOUNT, WHERE
BAFT ANCHORED HIS ROPE TO A
TREE...

GOOD, BAFT...
NOW I'LL HAVE A
LOOK AT THIS
LADY'S SISTER...

IN GREAT STEALTH, I
LOWERED MYSELF
INTO THE MOUNTAIN...

...AND SEARCHING FOR THE
SEPARATE TOWER.

THE LIGHTS
FROM THE CASTLE
WERE A HELP... AS
LONG AS THEY
DON'T SHOW TOO
MUCH OF ME.

I FOUND THE PIPE EASILY ENOUGH --
A CAVEY LADY, CALLING IT JACKSON'S
LADDER -- AND REALIZED WITH SHOCK
HOW CLOSE I WENT TO THE HOUSE...
WENT DOWN AND YET SO FAR AWAY.

THEN I NOTICED A WARM SCAPE
ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE PIPE...

IT WAS A SMALL BOAT, AND
IN IT SAT A SLEEPING MAN...

IT MUST BE JOHNNY'S
BROTHER -- AND ABLE.
JOHNNY MENTIONED THAT HE
WOULD BE ON GUARD HERE,
AND THAT HIS LOYALTY TO
BLACK MICHAEL EXTENDED
TO THE POINT...

I TOLD MYSELF IT WAS OVER... AND LIFE ON RIVER
MEANT THAT THE KING'S LIFE WAS AT STAKE... AND
WELL AS THE FATE OF AN ENTIRE KINGDOM...



... BUT I STILL FELT UNCOMFORTABLE,
WHETHER I HAD ANY CHOICE OR NOT,
THE DEED WAS UNCHANGING.



STILL, THERE WAS LITTLE TIME FOR
CONSIDERATION OR REGRET. I QUICKLY
RETURNED TO JACOB'S GARDEN
AND PRESSED MY BACK AGAINST THE
FENCE...



YES... TELL MY
BROTHER THAT I
SAY HIM TO LIVE...
I... I'M DYING BY
JACOB'S HAND...

HAVE YOU
ANYTHING TO
SAY BEFORE
I DO IT?

Two voices -- JACOB'S
AND THE KING'S -- NOW HE
HAD TO MAKE CHOICES...



I DID NOT TRY TO SPEAK TO
THE KING, KNOWING THAT THE
KING WAS TOO WEAK...



BEHIND, I HAD
ACCOMPLISHED
MY MISSION...
LEAVING THE
SAFETY OF THE
KING'S PERSON
AND CARRYING THE
MY OWN REASON.

BUT AS I WAS
TURNING FOR THE
TOWER, I HEARD
A VOICE CRYING OUT
FROM THE HEIGHTS
OF THE CASTLE
CALLING TO ME
TO COME BACK TO
MY HOME...



WAIT! WAIT WAIT--
ARE YOU THERE?
WHERE ARE YOU
GOING--?

HE THINKS I'M
NOT HOME-- AND
WHEN I DON'T
THEY'LL COME
SEARCHING FOR ME.

I HUNG MYSELF.

REACHING THE WALL, I THREW THE ROPE AROUND AND HUNG A HOOK, AS GALT AND MEYER HUNG UP IT UP. I HEARD THE SOUND OF FOOTSTEPS APPROACHING THE ENTRANCE'S MAIN ENTRANCE...



MEYER--
THEY'RE
GOING!

AND WHEN THEY'D REACHED THE MAIN ENTRANCE, I SAW...



GIVE A WHISTLE
FOR OUR MEN, GALT,
BUT DON'T FEAR--
THERE'S STILL A
CHANCE THEY MIGHT
NOT HEAR US HERE
IN THE BOAT...

IT WAS THREE OF
THESE GUYS APPEAR-
INGLY, AND AFTER
THEY SEARCHED
THE AREA FOR SOME
TIME, IT BECAME
THAT THEY WOULD NOT
FIND US...



... UNTIL OUR MEN, RESPONDING TO GALT'S
WHISTLE, CAME FROM THE BOATS WITH
A SHOUT...



COME ON, MEN--
--GET THEM!!

I HEAVILY BREATHED
IN FREEDOM...

... BUT IT WAS TOO LATE NOW FOR ANYTHING
BUT A FIGHT.



COME ON,
GALT-- MEYER--
HERE'S A CHANCE
TO REAP THE
VILLAINS!

THEY FOLLOWED A BOSS, BUT EXTREMELY
FIERCE, EVIL-LOOKING...

AT LAST, BUDDY
MONTAU--HE MEET
AGAIN!

OH-NO-NO! IF IT
ISN'T MY OLD FRIEND
THE PEACEMAN!



FOR A WHILE I THOUGHT I HAD MONTAU AND
WOULD READY HIM FOR HIS BARE ATTACK
WITH THE CROOK...

...BUT HE, BEING BOLD AND PRIDE FURNISHING
TO MY AID, JOSEPH SPECIALLY THE BETTER
PART OF THE VISION AND ENJOYED HIM HIS
PEACE...



WITH BUT A SINGLE GLEAM OF AMBIGUITY,
WE MIGHT HAVE POPPED HIM WITH BUL-
LETS, BUT THE CHALLENGE WAS TOO GREAT...



THE POLICE KNOW NOW!
BUT AT LEAST WE GOT
THAT OF THE DEVIL--
AND ARE THEY?

ARMSTRONG
AND ARMSTRONG--
THAT REVEALS "THE
BIG" TO THE FIGHT.

WELL, AT LEAST THAT'S
SOME NEWS -- SINCE WE
JUST NOW ARMSTRONG AND
ARMSTRONG BEFORE MONTAU
RETURN WITH JAMES MEN.



WE APPROACH OF THE THREE BROTHERS BY
SUPPORTING THEM INTO THE MOUNTAIN...



IN THE MANNER, THEY'LL
EVENTUALLY BE FOUND AND
EVER PRESENT BROTHERS -- BUT
NOT UNTIL WE'VE MADE GOOD
OUR PEACE.

THEN WE GALLOPED OFF DOWN THE HILL IN
HORRY, BELIEVED THAT NONE IN OUR PARTY
HAD BEEN INJURED, BUT EVEN MORE WOR-
RIED OVER THE SAFETY OF THE ROAD.



OUR PEACE FOR THE
MIGHT HAS BEEN FOLLO.

THEY ARE NOTHING TO US AND BUT BIDE OUR TIME FOR ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY. THE NEXT DAY I TOOK A RIDE WITH FLAVOR... AND MARSHAL STRANGENESS, FOR PERSONAL REASONS...



HENTZAU RODE UP TO US AND I AGreed, IN ALL HONESTY, ABOUT THE PROCEEDINGS...



"YOUR MAJESTY" THOSE ARE MY FRIENDS, LADYBORN, AND STRANGE, AND MAY HELP. THEY LOST THEIR LIVES LAST NIGHT AS A RESULT OF A... MURDER.

AN UNFORTUNATE AFFAIR, HENTZAU—I MUST HAVE A STEADY LOOK AGAINST REBELS.

AND NOW, IF MARSHAL STRANGENESS WILL RIDE AHEAD WITH THE PROCEEDS, I WOULD LIKE TO SPEAK WITH YOU ALONE.

ATTACK JONES CASTLE IMMEDIATELY, PLACING GALT AND PRIZE IN THE LEAD. I WILL ARRANGE FOR GALT, PRIZE AND BLACK MICHAEL TO BE KILLED—AND THE KING WILL PERCENT JACOB'S LANDS.



THEN ONLY FOUR WILL REMAIN TO SERVE THE CROWN—I, ELBERT OF HENTZAU, AND... THE KING OF HENTZAU.

IT APPEARED THERE WERE SEVEN THIRTEEN DEATHS—AND REPORT OF HENTZAU'S ROLE IN THE LEAD...

HENTZAU! RUPERT OF HENTZAU!



AND WHEN FLAVOR AND STRANGENESS HAD LEFT US...



YOU MIGHT REMIND LAST NIGHT, HENTZAU, BUT YOU'RE MUCH TOO YOUNG TO DIE.

WHY NOT BELIEVE YOUR FRIENDS WERE FOR ME, AND I PROMISE YOU WILL COME TO MY AID. I MIGHT EVEN ARRANGE A REWARD.

HENTZAU! YOUR "MAJESTY" IS QUITE OUT OF THE QUESTION HOWEVER, I AM HAVE A GOOD FOR MYSELF... FOR THIS.

IS THAT NOT A MIGHTY POWERFUL PROMISE? A THREE AND THE PROCEEDS FLAVOR? AS FOR ME, I'LL SETTLE FOR THE LADY WHO IS AT THE CASTLE NOW... ANOTHER OF MY REASON.



ONLY GALTSTONE AND FIFTEEN BLACK MICHAELS, BUT I'LL SOON DAMAGE THE KING.

SO YOU'VE EVEN TURN AGAINST BLACK MICHAEL. WELL, MY THING IS ME.



SO BE IT-- BUT BLACK MICHAEL PLEDGED NOT TO MY WHIM, AN, WELL, MARSHALL, YOUR MAJESTY-- AND YOU WOULD GIVE MY PLAN SOME FURTHER CONSIDERATION, I TRUST?

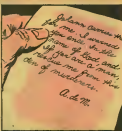
A STRANGE MAN, CERTAINLY--TALL, AND MUCH MORE, WAS REPORTED BY MONTREAL.



BACK A TALLENTED YOUNG GENTLEMAN, A CERTAIN ENLIGHTENED AS A DATE...

IT'S NOT APPROPRIATE ARE YOU CERTAIN IT'S FOR ME?

YES, ARE -- JOHANN, THE SECRETARY OF EMERGENCY, BROUGHT IT -- AND HE WAS MOST ANNOYED THAT YOU SHOULD RECEIVE IT.



Princess Flavia, I wanted to tell you. I wanted to tell you of God, and if you are a man, please me from the day of my death. A. de M.

THAT SETTLES IT, I DECIDED TO CALL A MEETING WITH GALT AND PRINCE AT ONCE...



BUT AS HE SAT DOWN TO PREPARE OUR NEXT STEPS...

WE'VE FAILED TO DO A SIMPLE THING TO HELP THE KING -- NOT TO MENTION ANOTHERS AS ANNOYING! I TELL YOU, WE MUST...

BAK BAK BAK

SEE WHO IT IS, PRITZ.



IT WAS ANOTHER PROBLEM, AND HE WASN'T ANNOYED ANYMORE...

THE PEOPLE ARE GROWING ANGRY, YOUR HIGHNESS, THEY ... THEY'RE DEMANDING THAT YOU GET A DATE FOR YOUR MARRIAGE TO THE PRINCESS FLAVIA.



VERY WELL, STRAIGHTEN, I HAVE DELAYED LONG ENOUGH. GET THE WEDDING FOR THE PRINCESS FLAVIA...

... AT THE STRAIGHTEN CATHEDRAL, WILL THAT PLEASE THEM?

IT WILL ANNOY YOUR MAJESTY! AND MAY I BE THE FIRST TO GIVE MYSELF TO YOU?

NOW I HAVE TO GO TO MY OFFICE IN THE KING -- OR THE KING'S OFFICE.

BUT IF I CAN KEEP IN THE
SHADOWS OF THE MONASTERY
WALL, I'LL BEAT THE
GHOSTS TO LINDEN WHEN
EVER THEY MAY BE...

I BARRICADE THE TOWER'S DRAWING ROOM
AND FURLED AROUND JACK'S LADDER
AT THE CHATEAU...

BLACK MICHAEL'S APPEAR-
ANCE IS STILL AWFUL... AND
THAT LOOKS LIKE ANTO-
NETTE DE MAISON STANDING
AT THE MONASTERY...

IT WAS NOT UNTIL LATER THAT I LEARNED WHAT HAD
HAPPENED IN THAT ROOM...

MENTALU? GET OUT OF
MY ROOM! THE CHURCHES
WILL BE BARRICADED IN THE
MIDDLE... AND I PRETEND
YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO COME
TO YOUR BED IN THE MONASTERY!

AS YOU KNOW, DUKE
MICHAEL, I DID NOT WANT
TO LEAVE THE
LADY ALONE, BUT
NOW THAT YOU'RE
HERE, OF COURSE...

AND NOW AS I LIVE AND
BREATHE, MENTALU STANDS BEFORE
ME! I COULD RECOGNIZE
THAT MENTALU STANCE
ANYWHERE! BUT WHAT IS
HE DOING IN BLACK
MICHAEL'S ROOM?

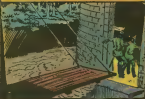
A FEW MINUTES LATER, MENTALU EMERGED
FROM THE CHATEAU INTO THE DRAWING ROOM,
CALLING BACK OVER HIS SHOULDER...

BEHOLD THE
BRIDE! BEHOLD
THE BRIDE OF
THE BRIDE!

ALL RIGHT, MENTALU,
LET'S GO -- BEFORE
THE BRIDE SLIPS
US BACK INTO THE
CHATEAU.

BE CAREFUL! HURRY
UP YOU FOLKS -- UNLESS
YOU WANT A BATH IN
YOUR OWN BED!

HENTHAM AND DE BAUTER RAN FOR THE TOWER ON CROSS FOUNDATIONS I CRASHED, AND THE TWO SALVED THE ENTRANCE ONLY AFTER THE SHADOWS HAD BEGUN TO RISE...



... AND BY THE TIME THE SHADOWS HAD ENVELOPED ITS FINE, HENTHAM AND DE BAUTER HAD UNRAVELLED AROUND THE TOWER, AND THE CHATEAU CLOCK TOLLED 8.15.



ALL WAS QUIET FOR A FEW MINUTES... AND THEN, SUDDENLY, A MAN EMERGED FROM THE TOWER CHATEAU...



PAUSING FOR A LONG LOOK AT THE WINDOW OF BLACK HENRI'S ROOM, HENTHAM THEN DROVE INTO THE MURRY WATERS OF THE MORT.



... AND SWAM STRAIGHT FOR THE CHATEAU.



REACHING THE CHATEAU SIDE OF THE MORT, HE CLIMBED A FLIGHT OF STONE STEPS LEADING TO THE UPPER SUBURBS. I KNOW THAT, HOWEVER, HE WOULD ENTER THE CHATEAU...

BUT WHY...? WHAT DOES HE MEAN TO DO?



I CLIMBED THE THREE STEPS FOR A BETTER SHOOTING POINT, BUT HENTZAU HAD ALREADY DISAPPEARED INTO THE CASTLEWALL...



SURELY, I SAW A BRIGHT GLIMMER IN THE WINDOW OF ANTONETTE'S ROOM -- ADDING A BLACK MICHAEL'S APPOINTMENT -- AND HEARD A TERRIBLE SCREAM...



HELP!
MICHAEL!
HENTZAU!!

ANTONETTE'S VOICE -- AND THE STRONG GUY I HAD GIVEN HER IN MY DREAM -- BUT THE CASTLEWALL GLIMMER HAD JUST STRUCK FLAME! IT WAS A HALL, NOT A TOO EARLY...

I COULD ONLY GUESS THE MEANING OF MY SIGNAL -- IT WAS THE SAME GUY WHO WOULD NATURALLY UTTER IF HENTZAU ATTACKED HER! IF BART'S PLAN CHANGED TO ARRIVE EARLY, ALL WOULD BE DISCOVERED INTO CONFUSION...



WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THERE?! OPEN THE DOOR OR I'LL BREAK IT DOWN!!

THAT'S BLACK MICHAEL'S VOICE -- HE'S COMING TO ANTONETTE'S AID!

AGAIN, I COULD ONLY IMAGINE WHAT WAS HAPPENING IN THAT ROOM -- BUT I HEARD THE STRAIN OF VOICES, THE CLANGING OF STEEL AND VOICES, ANTONETTE'S SCREAMS...



HENTZAU! DO YOU HOLD THERE, STEAL HER FROM HER VERY ROOM!

JEREMIAH...
HELP!
SOMEONE HELP!!

BUT ABOVE IT ALL, THERE WAS THE FRENCH LAUGHING OF RUPERT OF HENTZAU -- WHOSE LOVE OF BATTLE WAS SUCCEEDED, APPARENTLY ONLY BY HIS LOVE OF BRUTALITY BATTLES...



WELCOME, JOHANN -- HERE'S SOMETHING FOR YOU!

WELL, MICHAEL -- YOU CAN FIGHT FOR THE LADY AND HER FATHER, THAT'S / OR ELSE YOU -- IF YOU -- NO -- NO -- NO --

FOR LONG MOMENTS, THE WILD SCENE UNFOLDED -- DETERMINING THAT MONTAU WAS FIGHTING WITH ANOTHER GALE AGAINST BLACK MICHAEL AND HIS MEN. ...



HA-HA-HA-HA-HA!!!

BUT FINALLY, EVEN ROBERT MONTAU WAS FORCED TO ADMIT THE SUPERIORITY OF MICHAEL...



KREESH

HA-HA-HA-HA!!!

... ALTHOUGH NEVER FOR AN INSTANT DID HE LOSE HIS MARCHING PACE.

THEN, EVEN AS MONTAU BLAZED INTO THE ROOM, THE FIGHTER WENT FLYING OFF...



MONTAU--
WHERE ARE YOU?!!
WHAT WAS THAT
BOMB-- LIKE A BOMB
EXPLODING?!!

IT'S MY GUN!!
HERE'S MY
EXCUSE...!!

I LUNGED FORWARD AND STRUCK HIM WITH ALL MY STRENGTH. THE MAN FELL DEAD WITHOUT A BANNER...



THE LEAVES ONLY
TWO MORE OF THE
SIX ON GUARD
WITHIN!!

THE CHOREOGRAPHY OF OUR SCENE WAS COMPLETELY REVERSED, BUT MY FIRST CONSIDERATION WAS STILL THE KING'S MURDER. I HAD A STRANGE FEELING AND, WITHOUT THOUGHT, I TOOK IT--

I ALSO TOOK DE GAULT'S
RING OF KEYS.



SO QUICKLY THAT I COULD
HEAR THE POUNDING OF MY
HEART. I TESTED EACH OF THE
KEYS IN THE LOCK...



THIS WILL LEAD
TO THE FINEST OF
ROOMS--IN THE
FIRST OF WHICH I'LL
FIND THE KING'S FINE
ADVENTURING
GARDENS...

THEN, AS I FINALLY PICKED
THE RIGHT KEY AND TURNED
THE LOCK, INTO THE FIRST ROOM,
BURNING LEAPED UP TO GRAB
ME MY BETTER...



MY HEART BEAT AS
I SAW DETACHED
BURNING MEN -- BOTH
ME INTO THE SECOND
ROOM IN WHICH THE
STAND WAS BEING
FELL...

THERE WAS AN EARTHQUAKE -- TO REACH
DEFENDERS AND THE KING. I HAD TO
FIRST REMOVE BURNING FROM MY
PATH. I ATTACKED BURNING WITH
POWER...



THOUGH I FOUGHT
LIKE A MAN POS-
SESSOR OF POWER,
MY BURNING WAS
QUARTERED!

STILL I RAGED AND BLAZED AT HER, AND
THE PROTESTATION NEARLY DROVE HER AWAY
--FOR I KNEW THAT DETACHED MIGHT WELL BE
BLAZING THE KING AT THAT VERY MOMENT
AND I WAS HELPLESS -- HELPLESS!



FINALLY, AND MORE
POWERED BY MY OWN -- MY
ARM BECAME STRONGER
BY TENSENESS --
AND BURNING FELL!

STILL MORE, I BURST INTO THE INNER ROOM
JUST IN TIME TO SEE DEFENDERS BLAZING
A MAN --?



ARRGH--!

--BUT A MAN WHO WAS
NOT THE KING!

IT WAS A MISTAKE, APPARENTLY. DETERMINED TO TREAT THE KING AND PREVENT HIM FROM FLEEING, AND THROUGH HIS OBSTINACY, HE HAD SAVED THE LIFE OF HIS ENEMY... BUT AT THE COST OF HIS OWN LIFE...



MR. PETCHARD! AND YOU'LL HAVE TO KILL ME BEFORE I'LL LET YOU KILL THE KING.

HE WAS REALLY WILLING TO JUMP FORWARD WITHOUT HESITATING TO PIERCE MY ARM WITH THE POINT OF HIS SWORD...



ANN-!

COUSIN RUDOLF...? IS THAT NAME... REALLY HIS COUSIN...?

I WAS FORCED TO TRANSFER MY SWORD TO MY LEFT HAND AND FEND OFF PETCHARD'S ONSLAUGHT AS BEST I COULD...



THE CHAIR, SURE -- DRIVE THE CHAIR AGAINST HIS LEGS -- TRY TO GET HIM OFF BALANCE!

Y-YES COUSIN RUDOLF... I... I'LL TRY TO... H-HELP YOU.

THOUGH WEAK AND EXTREMELY FEIBLE, THE KING APPROACHED WITH HIS SWORD -- AND PETCHARD SPUN AROUND, DEALING HIM A SHATTERING BLOW...



NOOO!

EVEN AS THE KING FELL, I LUNGED FORWARD GRABBING BOTH OF MY ENEMIES AND WAS PETCHARD'S...

BUT WAS IT TOO LATE -- I HAD BOTH PETCHARD AND THE KING NOW DEAD...



NO... YOUR HEART STILL BEATS, MR. KING. ALTHOUGH THE WOUND IS DEEP...

THINK HEADING FOR BACKUP ON THE STRENGTHENED
 "WHEN I HEARD I REALIZED THERE WERE STILL MORE
 ENOUGH TO CONQUER, AND I DARED NOT LINGER TO
 TEST THE WIND..."



"IF YOU CAN HEAR ME,
 YOUR MAJESTY, I MUST
 ADVISE YOU NOW -- BUT,
 SWAP ANYWAY, I SHALL
 RETURN SOON."

BALANCE ONLY TO BRING MY
 WINDUP, I RETURNED BACK TO THE
 MYSTIC ROOM AND THERE SAW
 THE PLAYERS ON A TABLE...



BERENSON AND BERNARD
 HAD BEEN UNABLE TO
 RECOVER THEM EVEN BY EN-
 TRY TOOK THEM BY SUR-
 PRISE. I REACHED FOR THEM
 NOW...

STANDING UP THE STAIRS, I
 HEARD THE CLOCK STRIKE
 1:30. WHY HAD NO ONE
 CROOCHER THE STRENGTHENED
 MY ? AND HAD I BEEN LEFT
 AND ARE HAD ? AND JOHANN
 OPENED THE MAIN ENTRANCE
 TO THE CASTLE FOR THEM ?

HAD THEY SEARCHED AND
 NOT FOUND ME ? OR HAD
 THEY BEEN DEFEATED BY
 BLACK MICHAEL'S FORCES ?



THERE ARE MANY OTHER DOORS AND HALLS FILLED MY
 AND UNTIL I HEARD A LAUGH -- AN EARLY, GIDDY, JOYFUL,
 REVERENT LAUGH -- AND SAW MICHAEL'S MISTRESS STANDING
 ON THE STRENGTHENED...



WELL, JOHANN, YOU'VE
 LET THE STRENGTHENED
 -- BUT LET'S SEE BLACK
 MICHAEL !

COME DOWN AND
 FIGHT FOR ME,
 MICHAEL -- COME AND
 FIGHT FOR THE LAST
 ENTIRETY !

THEN THERE WAS
 A LOUD SHOUT,
 AND MICHAEL'S
 DE MARCH AN
 PLACED IN THE
 SHOT (REAR
 POSITION)...



HE'S DEAD!
 ON MY GOD --
 BLACK
 MICHAEL'S
 DEAD!!



SEEMING SOME ESCAPE FROM THE NIGHT, HENTZAU EVENTUALLY AGREEED—

WHY IS A SCREAM? NOW THE DEVIL, IT CAME TO ME AGAIN. I DON'T KNOW— BUT I DON'T ARGUE WITH ITS IMPERIAL!

STOP
HENTZAU
STOP !!

NOT UNTIL HE HAD REACHED THE TOP OF THE NIGHT HALL AND HE TURN TO LOOK DOWN ON HIS...

WHY IT'S NOT FRIEND THE PLAN. ACTUALLY HOW DID YOU GET HERE?

ATTENTION TO ME HENTZAU / NOW THAT BLACK MICHAEL'S DEAD, I'M READY TO INCLUDE YOUR PERSONAL FOR FINANCING THE MURDER!

HE REJECTED— APPARENTLY WANTS WILLING TO CONSIDER AND THAT NIGHT EARLY WITH THE LAMP ANTHEMISTS

BUT WHEN THE RIGHT ALARM BELL OF THE CHURCH BEGAN TO RING FURIOUSLY AND LOUD SHOUTS REACHED ALONG THE STRENGTH...

HENTZAU / I WANT TO ACCEPT YOUR PROPOSAL / DON'T I?

IT'S LIKE TO MY FRIEND— BUT THOSE BELLS MEAN I MUST RUN!

MY PLAN HAD FAILED, AND I HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO PURSUE HIM, EVEN THOUGH HE HAD ALREADY VANISHED INTO THE FOREST, THEN...

EEEEEEEEEE

BUT THEN, FOR IN AN INSTANT BURST OF STRENGTH, I PLUNGED INTO A CLEARING IN TIME TO SEE HENTZAU HOLDING A GUN OFF HIM

NO— LEAVE ME ALONE / YOU CAN'T STEAL MY PRISONER / HERE!!

FINDING ME, HE—

— BUT AT LEAST HERE ARE SOME ROOMS TO HIDE YOU

AGAIN I WAS STRUCK BY THE FACT THAT FOR A WHILE LONGER HENTZAU HAD INSTEAD A STRONG MAN...

— A WOMAN'S SUPPLE GORGON RIPPED THROUGH THE PINK BLOOD.

ARE THEY MORE SLOWLY TOWARD ME...

NOW THAT I'VE GOT THE
LOONEY OF A BROTHERLY
HORSE, YOUR "MAJESTY"
I CAN AFFORD TO SURRENDER
TO YOU. WHAT DID YOU DO
AT ZENON CASTLE?

I KILLED THE MONK
AND FEEL THAT HE STILL
LIVES -- KILLED THREE OF
YOUR MEN -- AND
BROUGHT ABOUT DEATH, FOR
A REASON I'LL NEVER
FORGET. I WAS BRAGGING
YOU ON THAT BRAGGING
MENTALITY WITH YOUR MEN
AND IN MY HANDS.

SO I WAS BETWEEN TWO
FIRE, WAS I? GOOD ENOUGH!
BUT TELL ME -- ARE YOU READY
TO TAKE UP MY FATHERSHIP IN
THE KINGDOM?



AND, CONQUEROR YOU?
I'LL HAVE NO PART IN
YOUR VILE SCHEME! YOU
GET OFF THAT HORSE AND
FIGHT LIKE A MAN!

IN FRONT OF
A LADY'S FIL,
YOUR "MAJESTY"!



I MANAGED TO LAY HIS OTHER ARM, BUT
BEFORE I WAS DRIVEN TO THE GROUND BY
THE LADY'S HORSE, HE WAS ALREADY DEAD...



I SWUNG AT HIM, SLASHING IN RAGE --
BUT HE PARRIED THE BLOW...

NO FURTHER,
RASCALLY! --
THAT SHOT WAS
A LITTLE TOO CLOSE!

THEN AN ARROW
REACHED ME,
BURST IN
MY HEART, AND
I WAS DEAD. MY
HORSE, BARE AND
FURIOUS, AS
HE WAS, TOOK
ME TO A
CERTAIN EXTENT
GUARANTY TO
THE KING -- AND
REMOVED IT WAS
THAT WHICH WAS
STAYED MY HAND
FROM KILLING
HIM.

WELL, YOU'VE COME
JUST IN TIME, IT
SEEMS. TELL ME --
DID THE KING LIVE?

YES, THANKS
TO ME -- THE
BRAVEST MAN WHO
EVER LIVED. NOW
ABOUT RASCALLY!
AND I'LL TELL YOU
WHAT HAPPENED...



WELL, I'LL TELL YOU
THAT ZENON HAD BEEN
ABLE TO OPEN THE
CASTLE DOOR AT THE
MOMENT WHEN, BEING
OCCUPIED WITH THE
DEFENSE OF HIS OWN
ARMY, IT WAS NOT
UNTIL I SAW THAT MY
HORSE, AND THE OTHERS
WERE ABLE TO GO
ON. MEANWHILE
THE FORTRESS ALREADY
HAD LEARNED THAT
THE KING LAY PRISONER
IN ZENON CASTLE
AND THUS IT WAS
ME, INSTEAD THAT
NATIONAL STRATEGY
BRING HER TO THE
CASTLE AT ONCE...



INDEED, EVEN AS PRINCE PAUL
COMPLETING HIS SPYING
PLANS AND STRAIGHTENING WERE
ACCEPTED BY THE HERBANT
BOSS... YOU MUST HELP ME!
A MAN STOLE MY HORSE --
AND THE KING -- HE TRIED TO
ARREST -- BUT HE NOW LIES
WOUNDED BACK IN THE GLADE!

HERBANT, GIRL --
THE KING LIES WOUNDED
UP IN A HIDEOUT
CASTLE.

WELL, HERBANT, STRA-
FENCE -- LET US SEE
ABOUT THIS. THE KING CAN'T
BE IN TWO PLACES AT ONCE.



I HEARD PRINCE'S VOICE,
-- AND THEN PRINCE WAS GONE --
GONE AWAY FROM ME, AS IF
TO MEET HER OFF...
PRINCE, THE GIRL SAYS
THE KING IS NOT IN THE
CASTLE -- BUT SOMEWHERE
IN THIS GLADE...

AND, PRINCESS
FLORA, THE GIRL IS
WRONG -- THE KING
IS AT TOWER CASTLE
AND --



WHAT? WHAT ARE YOU
TALKING ABOUT, PRINCE?
I SEE THE KING RIGHT
THERE -- WITH MY OWN
EYES!

MR. PRINCESS
FLORA -- RIGHT?
THAT IS NOT
THE KING...!



NOT THE KING --? /
RUDOLF, LOOK AT ME!
LOOK AT ME, MY DARLING --
TELL ME WHAT THIS
MEANS...!

IT MEANS, DEAR
GOD FATHER, ALL
FLORA... IT MEANS
THAT PRINCE IS
THE TRUTH...

I... I AM NOT
THE KING.



I HEARD HER VOICE CLOSE TO MY EAR, FELT
HER BODY TREMBLING AGAINST MINE... AND
THEN, AS SHE WHISPERED IN MY EAR...

...I HEFT... LONG, AND
BITTERLY, FROM GOD
WAS THIS NOW IT ALL
JUST END?



SEVERAL DAYS
LATER, PRINCE
PAUL, HAVING
DISCOVERED FROM
MY SLIGHT CLUES
AND REASONS
THAT IT MUST BE
WITH MY DREAMS,
I WANT TO SAY
FAREWELL TO THE
PRINCE.

COULD YOU BELIEVE, PAUL
AND PRINCE TELL ME THAT
I CAN'T TAKE YOU BACK TO
SPYGLASS -- THAT THE
SECRET MUST BE KEPT

EVEN SO, I HOPE THE
PEOPLE THERE WILL FIND
ME THE SAME KIND OF
RULER YOU HAVE BEEN.

IF I HAVE SUCCEEDED
MYA GIRL, THEN THAT
IS MY OWN FAREWELL.

BUT, JUST AS HE WAS READY TO LEAVE, FLORA SAID THAT FLAVIA WISHED TO SEE HIM, AND LET HIM TO HER TEMPERARY QUARTERS...

FLAVIA, I... I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT I DID NOT LOVE YOU... I LOVE YOU... WITH ALL MY HEART AND SOUL... AND MY GOD KNOWS IF I'VE DONE YOU ANY HARM...

I UNDERSTAND, RUDDOLF... IT WAS A DUTY ASSIGNED ON YOU...



REFUSED TO BE HONORABLE OR ART, MY EMOTIONS OVERTOOK ME, AND I COULDN'T FIND IN A MOMENT'S QUIETNESS...

THEN CAME WITH ME, DRIVING—BACK TO SWITZERLAND—AND BE MY WIFE!

YOU... YOU HOLD MY HEART IN THE PALM OF MY HAND... BUT I LOVE THE VERY THING. HEAVEN SENDS A WOMAN, THE RUDDOLF AND MY HEART LIES IN BEING TRUE TO MY CONSCIENCE. I MUST STAY HERE.



I WAS CAPABLE OF NOTHING, BUT LOVED HER ALL THE MORE FOR HER NOBLE DEEDS... AND THAT MADE THE PAIN STILL MORE POIGNANT...

AND SO I LEFT HIM I WAS A MAN, A COMMON TRAVELER... AND NOT LEAVING SO MUCH OF MYSELF BEHIND... THAT I WENT FOR LESS THAN THAT. I WAS BUT AN EMPTY SHELL... THAT EVEN MOTHER AND CONSCIENCE COULD NOT FILL.



GOODBYE, MY FRIEND.

BUT BLESS YOU, RUDDOLFF, YOU'RE MORE THAN WORTHY OF THE CROWN YOU CAN NO LONGER WEAR.

...AND... AND IT WOULD NOT HAVE MADE ANY DIFFERENCE IF I'D KNOWN WHO YOU WERE—AND YOU ARE. IT MADE AROUND YOU, RUDDOLF—KING AND MASTER OF THE ARMY.



OUR LIFE WAS A FINE TIME, AND WE WOULD HOLD THE MEMORY OF THAT TIME, AND THE BETTERMENT THAT IT OUR HEARTS PERCEIVED...



The years have passed since that I knew you, but the thing—my greatest meeting with destiny—in London. Now I give him a last time to look to my beloved Flavia, a man just beside by my lips, and from him I take a last word that has been present since the lips of Flavia. I kiss the man who made me great, with my heart the full you wanted, I take my heart... realizing all the time that, though we may never again be in each others' arms... we are given in each others' heart.

END



**ON
SALE
NOW!**

**MORE THRILLING
ILLUSTRATED ADAPTATIONS
IN THE MARVEL CLASSICS
SERIES!**



AND COMING IN OCTOBER
H.G. WELLS' **THE FIRST MEN IN THE MOON** AND JACK LONDON'S **WHITE FANG**